

**City of
Bellevue**



Transportation Commission Study Session

DATE: June 1, 2017

TO: Members of the Transportation Commission

FROM: Kevin McDonald, Principal Transportation Planner, 425-452-4558
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SUBJECT: Wilburton-Grand Connection Study Briefing

DIRECTION REQUESTED

Action

Discussion/Direction

☒ Information

The staff project manager for the Wilburton-Grand Connection Study, Bradley Calvert, Community Development Program Manager from the Planning and Community Development Department, and the Co-Chair of the Wilburton Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), Commissioner Lei Wu, will provide information on the status of the project and general direction the CAC is heading with regard to land use and transportation.

BACKGROUND

The Wilburton-Grand Connection planning initiative includes two primary elements, a re-visioning of the Wilburton Commercial Area as a new urban neighborhood; and establishing a new vision for the Grand Connection between Meydenbauer Bay and the Eastside Rail Corridor. To guide the effort, Council appointed a 15-member Citizens Advisory Committee, co-chaired by Lei Wu of the Transportation Commission and Jeremy Barksdale of the Planning Commission. The role of the CAC is to guide staff to establish an overall land use and mobility vision of the area, and to prepare recommendations for the Land Use Code and the Comprehensive Plan that would help achieve the vision. The CAC met for the first time in January 2017, and is expected to hold approximately 12 monthly meetings.

INFORMATION

Wilburton Commercial Area

Historically referred to as “Auto Row” the Wilburton Commercial Area straddles the 116th Avenue NE corridor between SE 5th Street and NE 12th Street. Land uses are commercial in nature, and the intensity of use is low. The opportunity for this area for a more urban vision for this area is created through local and regional investments in a number of planned transportation infrastructure improvements. By 2023 the Wilburton East Link light rail station will provide service at the northern end of the study area. Additionally the East Main, Downtown, Wilburton, and Spring District stations will ensure that the entire study area will be within a transit walkshed. As a complement to the enhanced transit service, the Eastside Rail Corridor will provide a non-motorized north-south spine through the entire study area and connect to regional destinations and facilities such as the I-90 Trail/Mountains to Sound Greenway and the DSR 520 Trail. The Grand Connection is anticipated to interface with the Eastside Rail Corridor and provide an east-west connection to Downtown.

Combined with the planned transportation improvements, the Wilburton Commercial Area is positioned between two high growth urban areas in Bellevue - Downtown and BelRed. This advantageous context plus exceptional mobility access create the opportunity for the Wilburton Commercial Area to become a new urban neighborhood. To explore opportunities and to capitalize on this unique context, the city has launched a land use, urban design, transportation, and environmental analysis of the study area. This process is intended to create the new vision that will include analysis and recommendations to zoning, urban design, transportation, and parks and open space. The analysis is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2018.

Grand Connection

The Grand Connection is envisioned as a corridor for non-motorized use with one anchor at Meydenbauer Bay, connecting through Old Bellevue, the Downtown Park, Downtown Bellevue, and crossing I-405 into the Wilburton Commercial Area, and anchored on the east with a connection to the Eastside Rail Corridor.

The City, through the Planning and Community Development Department has contracted with Balmori Associates, a landscape and urban design firm, to develop a high level vision for the planned route. This vision will include an overarching identity for the route, cohesive design strategies that will include paving, landscaping, and weather protection; improving the existing public spaces like Compass Plaza, and providing alternatives for a new crossing of Interstate 405. The work is separated into two phases; Phase One between Meydenbauer Bay and the Transit Center, and Phase Two between the Transit Center and the Eastside Rail Corridor, including the I-405 crossing.

The consultants have conducted public and stakeholder engagement to help prioritize and inform the design. To date, the design team has completed approximately 90% of Phase One. In April 2016 the City partnered with Bellevue Arts Museum to host a three day design charrette where over 70 architects, planners, engineers, and artists infused concepts and strategies into the project. Visioning for the Grand Connection is expected to conclude in mid-2017. A draft framework report will be released for public review and feedback in mid-June of 2017.

RECOMMENDATION

None at this time.

NEXT STEPS

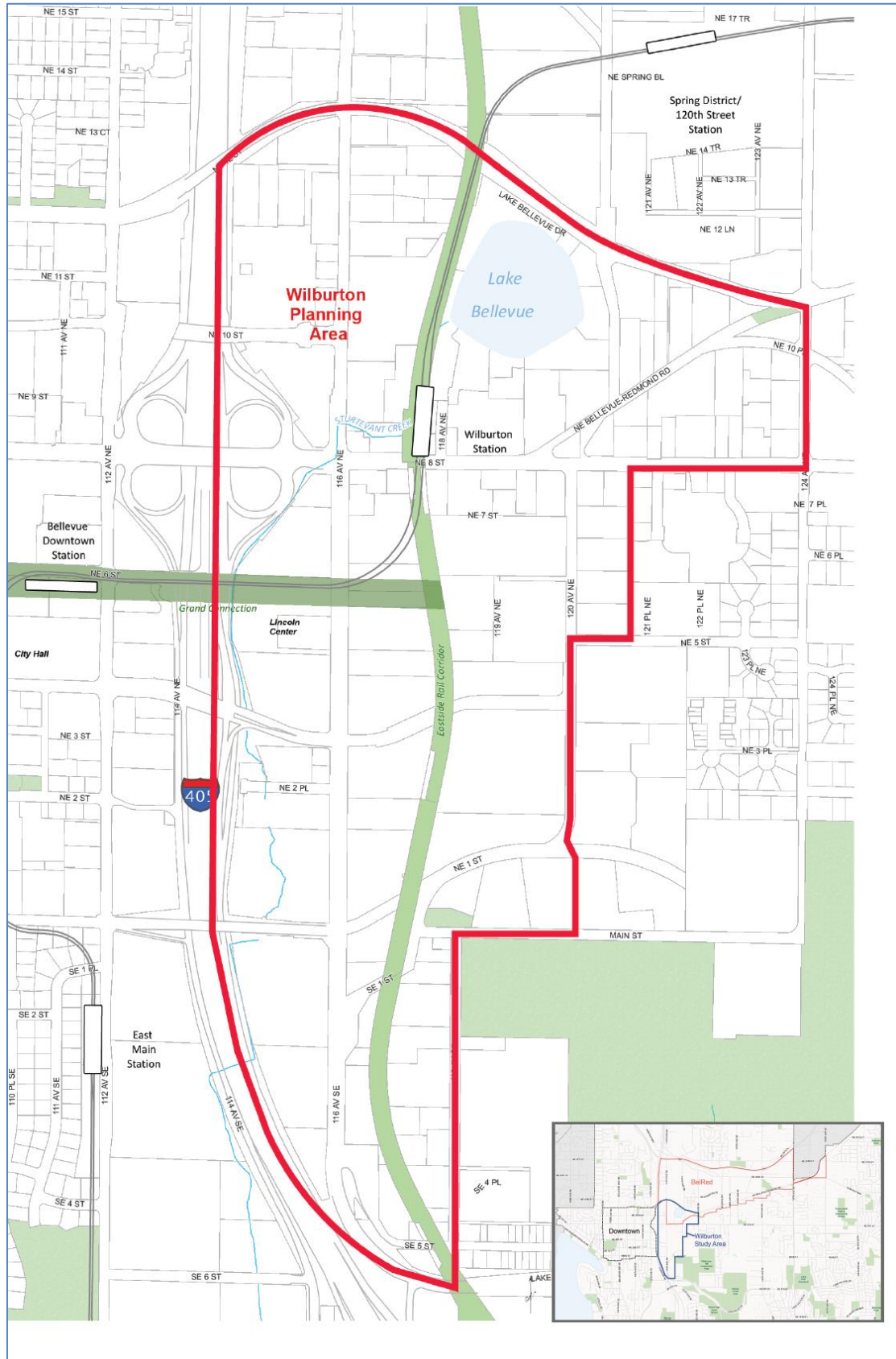
Staff will provide periodic briefings on the work and recommendations of the CAC, and will request Transportation Commission feedback as needed to help inform multimodal mobility policy and projects.

If you have any questions following the June 8, 2017 presentation and discussion, please feel free to contact Bradley Calvert at 425.452.6930 or bcalvert@bellevuewa.gov.

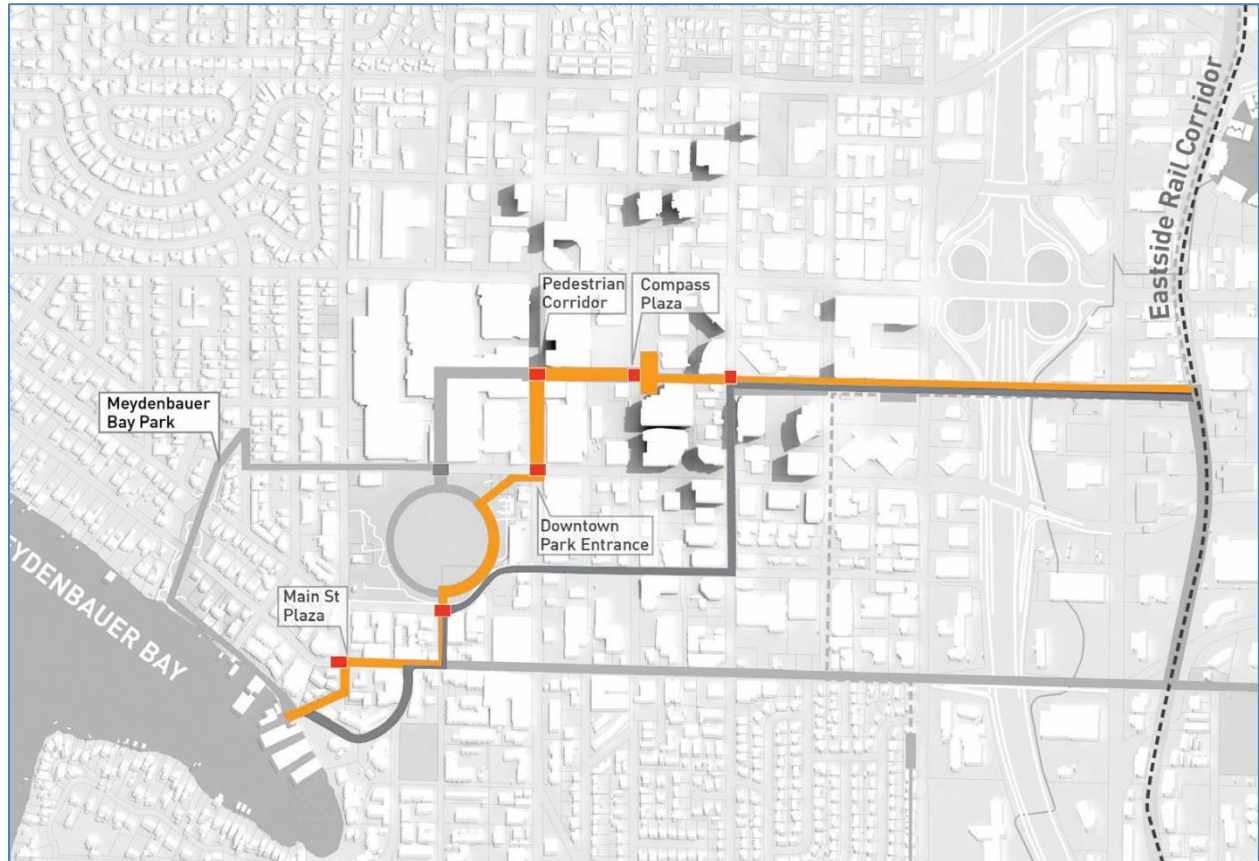
ATTACHMENTS

1. Map of the Wilburton Commercial Area Study Area
2. Map of Grand Connection
3. Wilburton CAC Membership Roster

Attachment 1. Wilburton Commercial Area Study Area



Attachment 2. Grand Connection



Attachment 3

Wilburton Commercial Area Citizen Advisory Committee

Appointed by the Bellevue City Council

Member	Representation
Jeremy Barksdale (co-chair)	Planning Commission
Lei Wu (co-chair)	Transportation Commission
Debra Kumar	Parks & Community Services Board
Maria Lau Hui	Arts Commission
James McEachran	Human Services Commission
Chris Johnson	Bellevue Chamber of Commerce
Matt Jack	Bellevue Downtown Association
Jon Duarte	Institution Representative
Alison Washburn	Business Representative
Sarah Chong	Bellevue Resident
Glen Griswold	Resident from nearby neighborhood
Jay Hamlin	Resident from nearby neighborhood
Andrew Pardoe	Bellevue Resident
Daniel Renn	Resident from nearby neighborhood
Don Weintraub	Resident from nearby neighborhood